



CAPITOL UPDATE

OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Penny Bernard Schaber

Serving the heart of Appleton



Friends,

As we near the end of the legislative session, I'd like to take this opportunity to look back over this, my first term, and update you on some of my accomplishments during this time. I'm proud of what I've been able to achieve for the working families of the Fox Cities; with the help of my fellow legislators, we've been able to make significant advancements in the areas of job creation, health care, and public safety.

I took office in the midst of the biggest economic crisis in generations. The crisis started on Wall Street, but did have an impact on Wisconsin, costing the state hundreds of thousands of jobs. Getting people back to work was my highest priority. As Vice-Chair of the Assembly Committee on Job, the Economy, and Small Business, I helped oversee our job creation legislation. These efforts brought more than \$4 million in tax incentives and grants to Fox Valley employers like Foremost Farms, NetPeak Energy Group, Aurizon Ultrasonics, and Pacon Corporation, saving or creating hundreds of jobs in the Fox Cities alone.

I also had an opportunity make an impact on Wisconsin's health care system, by expanding access to care. Two of the bills I authored, AB 111 and AB 112 expanded individuals' eligibility to participate in Health Insurance Risk-Sharing Plans. One of the purposes of HIRSPs is to provide health care coverage to individuals who are unable to buy insurance on the private market, whether because of the expense or because they were refused due to preexisting conditions. AB 111 ends the statutory lifetime limit on benefits under HIRSPs, to protect families who experience a sudden and costly medical crisis from running out of coverage they need it the most. AB 112 changes the law so that people no longer have to be denied coverage by two different insurers before they can enroll in a HIRSP, allowing them to enroll after only one denial. I'm pleased to report that both of these bills have passed and been signed into law by Gov. Doyle.

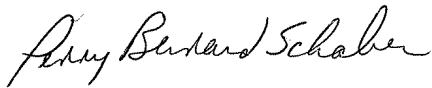
Another bill I was pleased to see signed into law was AB 261, the Check Scam Protection Act. A scam involving unsolicited live or real checks was being used. Companies would send checks, often to seniors and businesses, which bind the endorser to an unwanted costly contract or loan. These deceptive contracts withdraw money from the victim's bank account after the check is signed and deposited, and on average cost the victim \$3,000 to \$4,000. The Check Scam Protection Act prohibits this practice of sending out seemingly normal checks that commit people or businesses to a contract they did not intend to sign up for.

In addition to protecting consumers from fraud, I also was able to pass AB 308, a bill to assist police departments in providing security for high profile visitors. Before we passed this law, police motorcades were not exempt from stopping at red lights, meaning that traffic

would often create gaps in security. AB 308 allows police officers to safely escort vehicles through red lights and stop signs, for instance when taking opposing NFL teams from the Radisson Paper Valley Hotel to Lambeau Field. This legislation will enhance public safety as well as bringing in high profile events that serve as an economic boost to our community.

I also worked to pass AB 557 and AB 558, a pair of bills designed to protect victims of domestic violence. AB 558, which I co-authored with my colleague Rep. Tony Staskunas brought state law in line with federal laws that ban domestic abusers from possessing firearms, while AB 559 created a procedure that ensures that domestic abusers surrender their firearms in accordance with current law. If the firearms are not surrendered, the new law would require the abuser to appear in court, so that surrender can be arranged. We've had federal laws on the books for years requiring domestic abusers to turn in their guns local law enforcement doesn't have the ability to enforce those laws.

My first term has been busy and exciting. I have heard from many of you with questions, concerns or comments or ideas for and about legislation, or about your individual needs. It has been a pleasure to serve you. Thank you for helping to make my first term successful.



Penny Bernard Schaber
57th Assembly District

Events

Do you have an event you would like Penny to attend in Appleton? If so please contact the office at 608-266-3070 or email rep.bernardschaber@legis.wi.gov.

Penny's Pointer

May 31 is the final day to sign up for the next no-call list, which goes into effect July 1.

Consumers must register every two years to stay on the state's no-call list, which is updated four times per calendar year (January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1). The registration process is continuous; however, those who sign up after the upcoming May 31 deadline won't be added to the list until October 1.

To place your number(s) on the list, go online at NoCall.Wisconsin.gov or dial 1-866-9No-Call (1-866-966-2255). This website and toll-free number are available 24 hours a day. Consumer Protection encourages people to sign up in advance of the May 31 deadline to make certain they don't get caught up in the last-minute rush.